



**For Immediate Release
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Hoekstra Statement on WMD Commission Report

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra (R-MI), Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, today issued the following statement on the report of the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction:

“The conclusions of the WMD Commission report are both troubling and in many respects anticipated. The expectations we have for our Intelligence Community are rightfully high and clearly were not met with respect to the intelligence on the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

“As the report states, perfect intelligence, particularly against an adversary that is actively engaging in denial and deception activities, is impossible. Our dedicated intelligence analysts often must work with information that is fragmentary, and they must make difficult judgment calls without the benefit of complete facts. Still, the judgments made and the information passed to key decision makers were evidently and inexcusably inaccurate. We must expect and demand better.

“I am vitally concerned about the failures and limitations identified by the commission. However, I believe it can reasonably be said that many of these were well-known problems with specific causal factors. Our committee for a number of years has repeatedly identified many of these intelligence problems, including shortcomings in information sharing, tradecraft and analytic training, and the need to take political risks in gathering intelligence. We have focused a great deal of effort on rebuilding the Intelligence Community’s capabilities, particularly the human intelligence and analytic capabilities that were lost in the reductions during the 1990s.

“Further, in many respects our intelligence capabilities have been too focused on satisfying tactical information requirements for the military and other consumers. Unfortunately, this critical and necessary support has been at the expense of the long-term strategic intelligence needs of policy makers. The committee has clearly identified many of these shortcomings and has been working hard to correct these problems.

“Such correction is not realized overnight; it is a long-term and difficult effort. The passage last year of the intelligence reform legislation, ultimately signed into law by the president,

was just one step in that rebuilding effort. The structural improvements in creating a Director of National Intelligence will provide a dramatically better Intelligence Community by putting improved emphasis on the analytic components and by better ensuring coordinated and cooperative intelligence production using all components of the community.

“Finally, I think it is important to re-emphasize the limitations of intelligence. Intelligence collection, analysis and production is much more an art than it is a science. It is an amazingly difficult task to steal well-guarded secrets and create precise knowledge. Our policy makers and the American public must understand the limitations and, moreover, the imprecise nature of the art.

“I am gratified that the commission has come to many of the same conclusions reached by the House and Senate Intelligence Committees over the past years. I am hopeful that the entire Intelligence Community can learn the latest lessons from the commission’s report and move even more rapidly on the improvements already begun.

“The committee will continue to review the commission’s recommendations and determine if any additional legislative action is necessary. We owe the American public nothing less.”